

Glossary

BED LOAD	Particles of sand, gravel or soil carried by the natural flow of a stream on or immediately above its bed.
BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (BMP):	A practice or combination of practices determined to be the most practicable means of preventing or reducing, to a level compatible with water quality goals, the amount of pollution generated by nonpoint sources. BMPs are selected on the basis of site-specific conditions that reflect natural background conditions and political, social, economic, and technical feasibility.
BIOCHEMICAL OXYGEN DEMAND (BOD):	The quantity of oxygen utilized primarily in the biochemical oxidation of organic matter in a specified time and at a specified temperature.
CLASSIFIED WATERWAYS:	Water bodies that have designated uses as set forth by the State of Texas Water Quality Standards.
CLEAN RIVERS PROGRAM (TEXAS CLEAN RIVERS ACT):	Regional water quality assessment program established by the Texas Legislature in 1991.
DISSOLVED OXYGEN:	The amount of free (not chemically combined) oxygen in water. Usually expressed in milligrams per liter.
ECOREGION:	A broad geographic area delineated by regional patterns in land surface form, land use, natural vegetation, and soil type. Streams derive their chemical and biological character primarily from the climate, topography, substrate, biota, and culture of the watershed they drain. Therefore, an ecoregion approach to stream classification is useful for describing the regional variability of water chemistry, instream habitat, and fish community structure.
ECOSYSTEM APPROACH:	A long-term planning and management commitment to ensure the appropriate integration of ecological, economic, and social factors in order to restore, maintain and enhance the quality of the environment to best meet current and future needs.
EMPOWERMENT:	Shared decision making. Maximization of ownership by participants.
GEOGRAPHIC UNIT:	An area based primarily on hydrologic boundaries adjusted as needed using a specified set of criteria to accommodate the inventory and analysis of natural resources. A geographic unit can vary in scale depending on the criteria used, the level of inventory and analysis needed, and the problems perceived. In all cases, geographic units incorporate both groundwater and surface water.
GROUNDWATER RECHARGE:	The addition of water to the zone of saturation. Infiltration of precipitation and its movement to the water table is one form of natural recharge.
HYDROLOGIC UNIT AREA (HUA):	A set of maps depicting approved boundaries of, and numerical codes for, river basins of the United States, developed by the United States Geological Survey. These maps and associated codes provide a standardized base for use by water resources organizations in locating, storing, retrieving, and exchanging hydrologic data.

INTERMITTENT STREAM:	A stream that flows only part of the time. Flow generally occurs for several weeks or months in response to seasonal precipitation, due to groundwater discharge, in contrast to an ephemeral stream, which flows but a few hours or days following a single storm.
LOAD:	The total amount of material (point or nonpoint source) carried by a stream or river. Plural: loads or loadings.
METADATA:	The criteria that define a data field. For example, for the data field “family income,” the metadata might include the type of currency, time period (annual, lifetime), what constitutes a family, what constitutes income, and so on.
NATURAL SYSTEMS:	The interaction of atmospheric, terrestrial, and aquatic forces and processes within the ecosystems of the natural environment.
NONPOINT SOURCE (NPS) POLLUTION:	Human-made or human-induced pollution caused by diffuse, undefinable sources that are not regulated as point sources, resulting in the alteration of the chemical, physical, biological, and/or radiological integrity of the water.
PERENNIAL STREAM:	A stream that normally has water in its channel at all times.
PUBLIC AWARENESS:	Perception, realization, or knowledge the public has or shows of a particular topic.
PUBLIC OUTREACH INITIATIVES:	Any event, publication, exhibit or display, speech, meeting, or other activity intended to educate the general public or regulated community and build support for environmental programs.
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:	Those occasions when the public takes part in, shares in, and influences the outcome of issues, events, or policy decisions. Open forums, public meetings, surveys, and task forces are among the methods used to provide the opportunity for public participation.
QUALITY ASSURANCE:	An integrated system or program of activities involving planning, quality control, quality assessment, reporting, and quality improvement to ensure that a product or service meets defined standards of quality with a stated level of confidence.
QUALITY ASSURANCE PROJECT PLAN:	A quality assurance project plan (QAPP) provides a project- or task-specific blueprint for an environmental data operation to ensure that the results obtained are of the type and quality needed. The purpose of the QAPP is to reduce the risk of the user’s making an incorrect decision because of faulty data. The QAPP applies methods of quality assurance and quality control to achieve this goal.
QUALITY CONTROL:	The overall system of routine technical activities, the purpose of which is to measure and control the quality of a product or service so that it meets the needs of the user.
RIVER BASINS:	The 23 historically recognized drainage areas for the major rivers and coastal areas within the state of Texas.

STAKEHOLDERS:	Any entities involved in or affected by watershed management activities within a watershed. The term “stakeholders” covers a broad range of people and organizations, including government agencies, nongovernmental organizations, businesses, agricultural entities, the public, and the regulated community.
STREAM SEGMENT:	Surface waters of an approved planning area exhibiting common biological, chemical, hydrological, natural, and physical characteristics and processes. Segments will normally exhibit common reactions to external stresses (e.g., discharge or pollutants). Segmented waters include most rivers and their major tributaries, major reservoirs, and lakes, and marine waters which have designated physical boundaries, specific uses and specific numerical physicochemical criteria. Segments are classified in the water identification system utilized by the TNRCC OWRM and are the management unit to which water quality standards and regulations are applicable under the Clean Water Act.
TOTAL DISSOLVED SOLIDS (TDS):	An aggregate of carbonates, bicarbonates, chlorides, sulfates, phosphates, nitrates, etc., of calcium, magnesium, manganese, sodium, potassium, and other cations that form salts. High-TDS solutions have the capability of changing the chemical nature of water. High TDS concentrations exert varying degrees of osmotic pressures and often become lethal to the biological inhabitants of an aquatic environment.
TOTAL MAXIMUM DAILY LOADS (TMDLs)	A written, quantitative assessment of water quality problems and contributing sources, which identifies responsible parties and specifies actions needed to restore and protect water quality standards. TMDLs must include allocations for permitted point source discharges, nonpoint sources, and a margin of safety in setting the total amount of pollutants that a water body can safely assimilate. The margin of safety cannot be used as a set-aside for future growth or impacts to the water body.
TOTAL SEDIMENT LOAD:	The sum of the bed load and the suspended sediment load.
UNCLASSIFIED WATERS:	In Texas, those waters for which no classification has been assigned, and which have not been identified in Appendix A of Title 30 Texas Administrative Code.
WATERSHED:	An area bounded peripherally by a water divide and draining to a particular water course or body of water. Topography is the primary determinant of watershed boundaries. These boundaries are subject to change based on the needs of individual criteria.
WATER QUALITY STANDARDS (WQS):	Acceptable limits on water quality parameters are set by the state, with review by the EPA, so that when enforced they will meet the goals of the Clean Water Act.